



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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- [Iowa's trapping season starts Nov. 7](#)
- [Learn to Hunt program opens registration for virtual squirrel and rabbit hunting workshop](#)
- [Fall is a great time to catch fish in Iowa's rivers](#)
- [Seven additional community trout ponds ready for anglers to catch trout](#)

Iowa's trapping season starts Nov. 7



Iowa trappers can expect to find good numbers of furbearers available statewide when the season begins on November 7.

“Our coyote numbers remain strong with a stable to slightly decreasing population,” said Vince Evelsizer, furbearer biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Iowa’s red fox numbers didn’t show much movement in the annual survey but Evelsizer’s been getting a number of reports of increased local populations.

“Our raccoon population is high and I would encourage our furharvesters to take them even though their fur price is forecasted to be low,” he said.

The river otter population has trended upward in Iowa and that has translated to the quota for river otters increasing to three per licensed furharvester this year.

Iowa's bobcat population continues to increase and expand, opening Boone and Webster counties this year to bobcat harvest.

Iowa's bobcat harvest is divided into three zones – a three bobcat bag limit zone (southern Iowa), a one bobcat bag limit zone that Boone County and Webster County are now in, and a zone closed to bobcat harvest. Only one bobcat may come from the one bobcat zone regardless of the county in that zone it was taken from, the remaining cats must come from the three cat zone. No more than three bobcats total can be legally harvested by a furharvester this season.

Furharvesters are reminded of the requirement to contact a conservation officer within 24 hours of taking an otter or bobcat to receive a CITES tag. This is a change from the previous seven-day requirement. The CITES tag must remain with the animal until it is processed or sold. The DNR will not be collecting bobcat and otter skulls and lower jaws this year for tooth aging purposes.

He said while Iowa's muskrat population varies by region, their overall numbers are down this year following a trend that started in the early 1990s.

Overall, the wild fur market is weak again this year, which is similar to the last few years, but regardless of fur prices, Evelsizer encouraged trappers to take a beginner along to share the experience.

"It's good to get out, spend some time with a youngster, enjoy trapping and pass along our knowledge," he said. "If the weather forecast holds, it looks like it will be pretty nice for trapping, at least for the first few weeks."

The Iowa DNR has a few trapping videos as part of its new Learn to Hunt Iowa Online Video Series at www.iowadnr.gov/learntohunt and will soon be posting a beginning trapper webinar that was recorded in mid-October.

Media Contact: Vince EVELSIZER, Furbearer Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 641-357-3517.

Learn to Hunt program opens registration for virtual squirrel and rabbit hunting workshop

DES MOINES - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is offering a free virtual workshop to teach skills needed to hunt, field dress and cook squirrel and rabbit to individuals who have little to no hunting experience.

This virtual workshop consists of one online knowledge and skills building session with instructors that possess the experience to teach skills necessary to become efficient small game hunters.

"For those interested in the small game hunting as a means of sourcing their own protein, this program provides the opportunity to learn the skills and knowledge it takes

to do it all yourself,” said Jamie Cook, program coordinator with the Iowa DNR.

Participants will learn basic strategies for hunting squirrels and rabbits such as proper equipment, where to hunt, safe shooting practices, and how to field dress, clean and cook small game.

The course is geared for participants 16 and older. Those under 16 must have an adult register and participate in the course as well. Space online will be limited so register right way to ensure your spot. The course will be held Nov. 10 and will cover topics such as habitat and biology, hunting regulations, strategies, equipment and cooking. For more information and to begin the registration process please visit:

Nov. 10: <https://www.register-ed.com/events/view/163539>

The program is provided through a partnership with Backcountry Hunters and Anglers and the Iowa DNR. It is part of a national effort to recruit, retain and reactivate hunters due to the overall decline in hunting and outdoor recreation.

Media Contact: Jamie Cook, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 859-779-0222.

Fall is a great time to catch fish in Iowa's rivers

Enjoy Iowa's natural landscapes fishing Iowa's rivers and streams this fall. A unique angling challenge is hidden around every bend.

“You are never far from one of Iowa's many rivers,” said Greg Gelwicks, Iowa DNR interior rivers research biologist. “Fall is a great time to give them a try.”

Fish become more active and hungry when the stream temperature drops. “Look for actively feeding fish where riffles enter pools or rocky areas,” Gelwicks said. “They sit there out of the current and wait for food to come by.”

Many fish in Iowa's rivers search out deep pools with very little current to spend the winter. Fish start to move to overwintering areas in October, and most fish will arrive by November.

“Anglers willing to brave chilly temperatures can be rewarded if they also seek out these areas,” Gelwicks said.

Channel catfish will move to the deepest holes they can find in larger streams, often with depths greater than 15 feet, if available. Walleyes can be found in these same pools, but will also use slightly shallower areas with little current. Look for smallmouth bass in deep holes with boulders or woody structure.

When fish first move to wintering holes, deep running crankbaits and jigs with plastics work well. As water temperatures drop, switch to a jig and minnow fished slowly for best results. Try the upper Wapsipinicon River (Buchanan and Linn counties) or upper Cedar River

(Black Hawk and Bremer counties) for smallmouth bass. The Shell Rock River (Butler and Bremer counties) or upper Cedar Rivers (Black Hawk or Bremer Counties) are a

great choice for walleye.

An extensive list of Iowa's rivers, with information on access points and native species, is available on the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Where-to-Fish/Interior-Rivers.

Media Contact: Greg Gelwicks, interior rivers research biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 563-927-3276.

Seven additional community trout ponds ready for anglers to catch trout

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) released between 1,000 to 2,000 rainbow trout at seven additional community trout ponds across Iowa as part of its cool weather trout program that brings trout to areas that cannot support them during the summer.

The following locations have been stocked and are ready for anglers to catch trout: [Marr Park Pond](#) (Ainsworth), [Discovery Park Pond](#) (Muscatine), [Wilson Lake](#) (Fort Madison), [Ottumwa Park Pond](#) (Ottumwa), [Liberty Centre Pond](#) (North Liberty), [Prairie Park Pond](#) (Cedar Rapids) and [Bacon Creek Pond](#) (Sioux City).

All fall community trout stockings will be unannounced and there will not be any family fishing events to help reduce the crowd size at stocking locations and minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Check our website at www.iowadnr.gov/trout and watch for future press releases to find out when the remaining community trout locations have been stocked. All community trout stocking locations should be stocked by November 4th.

The fall community trout stockings are a great place to take kids to catch their first fish. A small hook with a nightcrawler or corn under a small bobber or small simple spinners such as a panther martin or mepps is all you need to get in on the fun.

Bringing trout to cities and towns offers a "close to home" option for Iowans who might not travel to the coldwater streams in northeast Iowa to discover trout fishing.

The popular program is supported by the sales of the trout fee. Anglers need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. The daily limit is five trout per licensed angler with a possession limit of 10.

Children age 15 or younger can fish for trout with a properly licensed adult, but they must limit their catch to one daily limit. The child can purchase a trout fee which will allow them to catch their own limit.

Find more information about trout fishing in Iowa including our Community Trout Stocking Program on the [DNR trout fishing webpage](#).

Media Contact: Mike Steuck, regional fisheries supervisor, Northeast Iowa, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 563-927-3276.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is working with state and local officials to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and has transitioned employees to work remotely. DNR offices are closed to the public during this time and only available by appointment.

In other efforts to further reduce the spread of Covid-19, the DNR is encouraging the use of the online services for purchasing licenses, submitting applications, payments and other daily tasks and interaction with DNR staff.

The FREE Go Outdoors Iowa app is available at the App store and Google Play. The Go Outdoors Iowa app allows users to purchase and view hunting and fishing licenses and submit harvest and quota reports, all from your cell phone.

Full list of DNR's online services: <https://www.iowadnr.gov/about-dnr/about-dnr/online-services-databases>.

Up-to-date information on DNR services, facilities and events impacted by Covid-19: <https://www.iowadnr.gov/About-DNR/Covid-19>.

Technical information for regulated businesses in regards to Covid-19: <https://www.iowadnr.gov/About-DNR/Social-Media-Press-Room/Disaster-Assistance#3057321-covid---19-outbreak>.

Thank you for your patience and flexibility during this time. If you need to contact DNR staff you can reach them by email or phone or by calling (515) 725-8200.